

patches, my beloved

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patches, my beloved

by [myicedcoffee](#)

Summary

Patches walks lazily back to George's bed and flicks him in the face with her tail when she jumps up as if to say, *'how dare you let him take me.'*

George huffs, amused, while Dream stands helplessly with his arms hanging at his sides and stares at her with a gaping mouth.

"Oh, my God, you stole my cat," he whispers, voice pitched higher than usual.

Patches takes a liking to George, and Dream is jealous, so they take the obvious route— all three of them sleep in George's bed.

Notes

hi !!

i got the idea for this fic from [this tweet](#) and drabbled it out in my free time because there needs to be more patches fics

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

It's three in the morning when Dream shows up in his doorway.

He sits up, pushing the comforter out of his face and blinking at the sudden influx of light in his room.

"What the hell?" he slurs, voice thick and heavy from sleep.

Instead of providing a reasonable explanation, Dream steps further into his room and makes a show of craning his neck to look around his room before pointedly locking eyes with him and staring at him through lidded eyes.

"Patches is in here."

Maybe it's just George's sleep muddled mind, but he doesn't seem to phrase it as a question; it's more of a definite statement. Like he *knows* Patches had slipped into George's room in the middle of the night, and he's just waiting with bated breath for him to fess up.

He blinks a few times, trying to wash as much lingering tiredness away as he can, and pushes himself up to lean on the weight of his hand. He lets his own eyes roam around the room for a short moment before catching on a lump next to his pillow, rising and falling slowly.

Patches.

He remembers, now, that she'd started scratching at his door just as he'd laid down to sleep. It persisted for quite some time, until finally, he gave in and opened the door to let her in. She'd immediately made a beeline for his bed, leaping up onto it and kneading her paws into his spare pillow. He hadn't had enough energy to stop her, so he just closed his door and went right to bed.

"Yeah," he mumbles. "Yeah, uh, she came in earlier. Is that a problem?"

Dream frowns, and steps forward until his knees are flush with the end of George's bed and he can reach an arm out to gently stroke Patches' fur. He gives a small shrug, trying to seem nonchalant about it, but George can sense a sort of unrest in the way he holds himself.

"Course not," he says, lowering his voice to a volume not much higher than a whisper when he realizes the state George is in. Now that he's managed to wake himself up more, he takes in the soft rasp of Dream's voice, and realizes he must have been sleeping, too. "She likes you."

Tentatively, George pulls himself up to sit properly, patting the bed in front of him. Dream quickly takes the offer, slipping onto the bed and pulling Patches gently to rest in his lap as he scratches behind her ear. It's obvious he's taking great care not to wake her up, and George resists the urge to coo at the both of them.

Because that would be stupid, obviously.

"So... what's up?"

He searches Dream's face for an answer when he doesn't respond immediately, dipping his chin down to catch his eye and dragging his gaze back up with him.

Dream sighs. "It's dumb. I don't even— she just usually sleeps in my room. I don't know why she came in here tonight."

“Oh.” George blinks, and a small smile lifts at the corner of his mouth. “She must just like me better than you.”

Scoffing, Dream casts his eyes back down to where his hand has stilled, and startles when George places a light hand on top of his. He resumes petting her back, and George slips his fingers beneath Dream’s, scratching softly at the places his don’t reach.

“George?” He hums in acknowledgement, most of his focus on holding his heavy eyelids open and making sure Patches doesn’t wake. “I’m taking my cat back.”

He bites back a quiet laugh and shrugs, drawing his hand back and looking up to see Dream already watching him. “Go, then. Let me sleep, idiot.”

Dream gives him a soft smile and moves to stand up, cradling Patches in his arms as he crawls carefully off the bed and moves for the door. Patches, however, seems to have other plans, immediately stirring awake and lifting her head up to look around. When she sees the open door, she jumps out of his arms, walking lazily back to George’s bed and flicking him in the face with her tail when she jumps up as if to say, *‘how dare you let him take me.’*

George huffs, amused, while Dream stands helplessly with his arms hanging at his sides and stares at her with a gaping mouth.

“Oh, my God, you stole my cat,” he whispers, voice pitched higher than usual.

“She *chose* me,” George says through a laugh, “and it’s over. I’m going to bed.”

He doesn’t wait for an answer, instead slipping back under the covers and burying his head in the plush pillow. He falters when he hears a creak and the bed dips beside him, however, and he has to strain his neck over his shoulder to peer behind him.

“Fuck this,” Dream says. He flops onto the empty side of George’s bed, staying on top of the blankets and moving Patches to lay on his chest. “She’s sleeping with me.”

George scoffs. “Get out of my bed,” he says, delivering a light shove to Dream’s shoulder. It doesn’t really do much. “You can have her back tomorrow.”

Dream hums and shuffles around, trying to get comfortable and jostling George in the process. He ignores the pointed glare he throws in his direction. “No.”

George tries to argue, he really does, but when Dream’s eyes slip closed and his breathing evens out to a steady rise and fall, he finds himself slipping too, stubbornly cocooned on his own side of the bed and stealing every last bit of extra body heat he can.

II.

Patches finds her way into George’s room earlier tonight, before anyone else is even asleep.

He does his best to usher her out, trying everything he can think of; placing treats outside the door, carrying her out, even leaving the room and laying on the couch to see if she’ll follow him. She doesn’t, though, and when he finds her stretched out along the foot of his bed with her eyes closed contentedly, he decides she must just like something about his room in particular.

Dream comes in earlier tonight, too, obviously not willing to let his grogginess stop him from taking his cat back.

“George,” he pleads after a few minutes of endless back and forth, “I miss her. Give her back to me, please.”

George hums, leaning back against his headboard and crossing his legs. As if on cue, Patches meanders into his lap, toying with the fabric of his sweats as he lifts a hand to scratch behind her ear.

“She just likes me best, I don’t think you’re getting her back,” he grins, only half-joking. Dream tilts his head and gives him an unimpressed look, eyes lidded and mouth turned down in a frown. As much fun as it is to mess with him, he feels a little bad, but it’s not like there’s anything he can do about it.

With a defeated sigh, Dream flops forward onto the bed, burying his face in the comforter and letting out a loud groan. When he speaks, his words are so muffled George can barely make out what he’s saying. “It’s weird to sleep without her around, though.”

George stays silent for a long moment, letting it stretch on as he considers his options. He could easily just kick him out, settle into bed for the night– it’s not like it’d be hard. Dream would never say no to him. But–

“I’ll make you a deal. You can sleep in here again as long as you give me space,” he offers before he can get the chance to stop himself. Dream doesn’t respond immediately, though he lifts his head up to stare at George with an unreadable expression on his face. George feels his cheeks start to grow warm, and hopes it’s not too noticeable. “If you want, obviously. You don’t have to. It’s fine if– if you want.”

Dream cuts his rambling short with a shake of his head, a devilish grin spreading across his lips. “Aw, you mean I’m not allowed to cuddle you? What a shame, I really was planning on it.”

If Goege’s heart skips a beat at the image of him and Dream wrapped up together, in each other, that’s for no one to know but himself. He knows he wasn’t serious, that much is obvious. His aim is to fluster George, it always is. So he scoffs.

“Nevermind. Goodnight.”

Though it’s a painfully obvious bluff, Dream’s hand immediately shoots out to settle on Patches’ back. “No, no, wait.” He doesn’t break eye contact, shoving as much emotion as he can into pleading eyes as their gazes hold steady, because he knows George is a weak man. “Let me stay?”

And maybe it’s because his voice is quiet or his presence brings comfort, but George says yes in an instant. An embarrassingly quick instant. He hands Patches over and pulls back the corner of the comforter once Dream’s clicked the light off, a silent invitation for him to shuffle under, and he does. George’ll be damned if he doesn’t maintain some semblance of dignity, though, so before he falls asleep he pulls extra pillows from beneath their heads and piles them between their bodies.

“Really, George?” Dream pipes up from the other side with a snort. “A pillow wall?”

George rolls his eyes, pointedly yanking the covers toward himself and smiling to himself when Dream yanks them back. “Yeah. You got what you wanted, deal with it.”

Dream doesn’t say anything back, and it’s quiet for so long George assumes he’s fallen asleep, but then he hears a shallow breath and a hum.

“Yeah. Yeah, of course.” He pauses. “Goodnight, George.”

III.

They really seem to be making a habit of this.

The third day Patches finds her way into George’s room, he makes no attempt to shut her out, instead scooping her up into his arms and waiting expectantly as he stares at the door. In a non-weird way, of course. He’s waiting for Dream to come in and take her back, nothing else.

The swoop of his stomach when Dream gingerly knocks on the doorframe and pokes his head around says otherwise. He tells it to shut up.

“Hi,” he says, shuffling back to sit on the edge of his bed.

“Hi,” Dream responds, giving a small smile as he steps fully into the room.

George pulls on a loose string hanging off the hem of his sweater, rolling it between his fingers nervously. “Do you, uh, are you gonna sleep in here again tonight?”

Dream rubs the back of his neck, looking just as shy. George tries not to think too much into it. “If you want. I mean— you have Patches, so. Yeah. Probably.”

George nods, and Dream nods back, and neither of them move for what feels like far too long. Eventually, George blinks and hooks a thumb over his shoulder.

“I’m probably gonna head off now. If you want to join me. And Patches. Mostly Patches.”

Dream raises an eyebrow and a light laugh bubbles up from his chest. “Mostly?” he teases.

The tips of George’s ears heat up. “Shut up,” he mumbles, crawling backwards on the bed with Patches still in his arms to settle underneath the blanket without waiting for Dream to follow. He knows he will.

The room goes dark, encased in nothing but pale moonlight streaming in from the open window—this is how George likes it best, he thinks. The bed dips beside him and Dream coughs, and he realizes too late that he still has Patches wrapped by on his chest, fast asleep. He doesn’t want to move her, she looks so peaceful, but he moves to pick her up anyway, because this is why Dream is here.

Not for him. For his cat.

Before he gets the chance to grab her, though, a warm arm appears above his waist, hand hovering cautiously next to his chest.

“Is this okay?” Dream asks, and it takes everything George has in him not to flinch at the low voice suddenly right next to his ear. He swallows, afraid his voice will come out small if he speaks, so he just nods.

Dream rests his arm fully across George’s waist as soon as he gets permission, and he buries his hand in Patches’ fur. His pinkie just barely grazes George’s and he goes to pull away, but Dream just hooks them together lazily.

Now, in the quiet of the night and the languid pull of sleep, George's brain finally catches up to everything happening around him. The steady rise and fall of Dream's chest pressed flush to his back is far more obvious now, and the press of his knee against the back of George's provides a sort of comfort that he'd deny if ever asked about it.

Maybe, it feels a little nice knowing someone is there. Knowing *Dream is there, safe and real. Just a little.*

IV.

Surprisingly enough, Patches doesn't find her way onto the bed tonight.

She still wanders into George's room, right on time, but instead of taking her usual place next to him as he lays staring at an open laptop playing some show he doesn't recognize, she collapses unceremoniously onto the floor beneath his nightstand.

Her head is laid on her paws as she stares up at him with wide yellow eyes, meowing every once in a while to remind him of her presence. He tries to invite her up a few times, but she refuses, comfortable in her own little nook.

Eventually his attention is pulled away from the laptop altogether, replaced by scratching under Patches' chin and cooing gently when she squeezes her eyes shut and pushes into the touch. He shifts positions to make it easier to cup her face in his palm as he scratches, swinging his legs over the side of the bed and hunching over to comfortably reach the floor.

"Hi, sweetheart," he murmurs, smiling softly when she purrs against his hand. "You're so pretty, look at you. So sweet, did you find yourself a new spot to rest?"

"You guys are cute."

George jumps, startled by the unexpected voice that sounds from behind him, and Patches immediately pulls away and settles back underneath the nightstand. He frowns at her before turning around, sending a playful glare toward where Dream stands in his doorway with his hands in his pockets.

"Idiot, why'd you do that? You scared her," he says, though he doesn't mind all that much. Even though he knew the 'cute' hadn't quite been directed at him, it still made his heart do flips in his chest.

Dream chuckles, stepping further into the room as he shakes his head. His hair falls into his eyes, and George is hit with the sudden urge to brush it back. Instead, he rests his hands on his knees and doesn't dwell on it.

"Sorry, sorry." Dream gingerly rests one knee on the bed and moves to sit down on it, one leg pulled up as the other hangs over the edge. He glances at where George's laptop still sits open on his pillow. "What are you watching?"

George follows his gaze and shrugs. "I don't really know, actually. It just came on and I was too lazy to turn it off."

Dream laughs at that, face splitting into an endearingly wide smile as the corners of his eyes

crinkle pleasantly. Cute. Or— not. Not cute. George shakes his head of the thought, but finds himself grinning at him anyway.

“Can I... watch something with you?” Dream asks once his laughter has subsided, leaning back on his hands. “I’m kind of tired.”

George’s brow pinches together. “Why don’t you just go to bed, then?”

Dream glances down at Patches and then up to meet George’s eyes, lingering on his face. Right. Patches. Wordlessly, he clicks out of what he’d been watching and hands the laptop over to Dream, watching as he types something out that he can’t see.

His eyes find their way up to his face, roaming over the way his eyebrows are drawn in concentration and his tongue pokes out between his teeth. George bites the inside of his cheek, stopping at the hair hanging over Dream’s eyes as his hand stirs. Before he can stop himself, he’s reaching out to push it back carefully, flushing when Dream’s eyes flick up to look at him.

He swallows, running a hand through his hair just as George had done mere seconds ago. “Thanks,” he mumbles, and if George looks hard enough, he can just barely see his cheeks darken as he dips his head back down.

George taps a socked foot against Dream’s knee, hooking it around his leg and tugging. He takes the hint and shuffles forward, following George underneath the blankets and perching the laptop tediously on top of their knees. It wobbles a bit, but it stays in place, and as soon as they’re comfortable he hits the spacebar to start the movie.

Half an hour in, he slouches against George’s side, and George doesn’t think much of it until a few minutes later, when his head lolls to the side and his nose brushes against his neck, resting his weight on George’s shoulder. He freezes, stiffening when warm breath fans across exposed skin, but doesn’t move for fear of disturbing him. It’s only when Dream’s elbow digs into his side that he has to give his shoulder a small shake, sighing when he looks up at him with bleary eyes.

“Are you tired?” he asks, thumbing away a bit of drool that’d gathered on Dream’s chin as he bites back a smile. Dream nods and pushes himself up.

“Is it— is it okay if I sleep here again?”

George frowns in confusion. “Patches is on the floor, you can just take her back to your room. I think she’s had enough of me.”

“I haven’t... It’s not because of Patches,” Dream says quietly, averting his gaze. He picks at a piece of lint on the comforter, and George leans forward to pause the movie, motioning for Dream to continue. He does. “That was a weird way to put it. It is because of Patches, but I don’t— I’m just used to it now, I think. Sorry.”

“No, no, it’s fine, Dream. I don’t mind.” George closes the laptop, moving it onto his nightstand before returning his hands to his lap.

Dream smiles tiredly, the corner of his mouth lifting into the dip of his dimple. George can’t help but smile back. “Yeah?”

“Yeah,” George nods.

Cautiously, he reaches out to tap Dream’s arm three times, letting him settle onto the pillow while he gets up to turn the light off. When he comes back, Dream wraps an arm around his waist,

pulling him into his chest when he lays down. His breath catches in his throat when he feels Dream's chin press against the top of his head.

"Is this okay?" Dream whispers.

George grimaces. He sounds so comfortable, and he feels safe in his arms, but it's just a little too overwhelming and he's really too tired to think about it.

"Maybe, uh—" He pauses, pulling his head away from his chest and moving back a couple of inches. His chest pangs at the hurt that flashes through Dream's eyes before it's gone again, just as quickly as it came. His voice comes out shaky, and he curses himself. "Maybe just give me a little space."

Dream draws his bottom lip between his teeth and takes his arm off of George's waist, resting it between their heads instead. "Right. Sorry."

Shaking his head, George lays a tentative hand on the curve of his elbow, hooking his fingers securely around it. "It's okay," he murmurs.

At some point during the night, Patches hops up onto the bed when Dream is sound asleep; George still laying awake to greet her. She curls up between them and peers up at him with bright eyes, and it feels as if she's asking him a question.

He doesn't answer.

V.

Tonight, Patches makes it into the room first, as expected. Dream, however, doesn't follow—instead, he's greeted by Sapnap when he opens his door.

Though he can't say he's entirely surprised, he still frowns at him. "What's up?"

Sapnap wastes no time getting to the point. "Dream's been sleeping in your room," he says bluntly.

George's eyes widen momentarily, and he scratches at the back of his neck to mask the sudden awkwardness the conversation's taken on. "Yeah, because of Patches."

"So he told me," Sapnap deadpans, looking wildly unimpressed.

He pushes past George, venturing into his room and plopping down on the edge of the bed. He looks up at George expectantly as he closes the door and leans against it, and it's obvious he's here for a conversation, so George relents. If only to get it over with.

"Okay, so... did you need something?" He's honestly not quite sure he wants to know where this conversation is going.

"Yeah, Patches."

He's not quite sure if it's going anywhere, at this point.

He makes a face at Sapnap and crosses his arms. "Patches? What do you need her for, she's fine

in here.”

“Well, I was thinking,” Sapnap starts, and that can never be good. George is already mourning the loss of his sanity before he can even open his mouth to speak again. “If she’s not in here, then Dream has no reason to come in. So then he won’t, right? And that should be fine because neither of you want him sleeping in here.”

He has this knowing smile on his face, and George isn’t sure what he knows, he knows it’s stupid.

“What are you getting at?” he huffs. He’s incredibly afraid he already knows what he’s getting at.

And he’s a little off, but not by too much— Sapnap doesn’t ask the question he’d expected, but what he does ask is arguably just as bad.

“Do you guys, like, like each other or something?”

“What?” George splutters, scoffing as he diverts his gaze and finally steps away from the door to find a seat on the floor. “That’s stupid, obviously not.”

Sapnap kicks his knee lightly. “That wasn’t a question.”

“You phrased it as one,” George retorts, trying to sound teasing, but it comes out embarrassingly flat.

With a sigh, Sapnap slides off the bed to sit in front of him, placing a soothing hand on his knee and guiding his eyes back up to meet his own. George relaxes with the touch.

“You like him,” Sapnap says, softer this time. He’s not joking.

George barks out an unamused laugh. “Why, because he’s slept in my bed a few times? That’s stupid, come on.”

“You know that’s not why.” Sapnap tilts his head. “If it makes you feel any better, he likes you too.”

It’s meant to be comforting, or reassuring, but really, it’s just stressful. George is still trying to process the first thing he’d said— trying furiously to deny to himself that he likes Dream. All the signs were there. He’s not stupid enough to miss something like that, even if he tried. You made it so obvious. He’s only ever done what friends do, felt what friends do.

There couldn’t have been anything lying beneath the surface this whole time, and if there was, it sure as hell wasn’t going to be exposed by some stupid bed sharing.

And Dream, liking him? He doesn’t want to get anywhere close to getting started on that, because he’s afraid he won’t stop.

“No,” he mutters. “No, that’s not— we don’t like each other. We’re friends.”

Sapnap crosses his legs, puffing out his cheeks and popping them as he thinks quietly. Finally, he draws his hand back and leans forward. “Can I prove it to you?”

And, against every fibre of his being, George says yes. Because he doesn’t believe it can be proven (because maybe he wants it to be proven.)

Sapnap scoops Patches up and carries her away with ease, and George tries not to dwell too hard on the fact that he likely could have done that before, given her to Dream and let her go, but he

didn't.

Shit.

He sits stubbornly in his bed, watching the bright numbers on his digital clock blink by as minutes pass, refusing to give in and seek out Dream, even though he wants to. It feels like an admittance, so he stalls for as long as possible, tossing and turning until he grows fed up with waiting and gets out of bed.

He reaches the door, his hand on the knob about to turn, when it swings open beneath his loose touch and he's met face to face with the boy he'd just been about to look for. He takes a stumbled step back, looking up into eyes that, for once, are wide awake.

"Uh, hi," he whispers.

Dream's gaze is trained just below George's eye, not quite meeting them, the tips of his ears flushed. Holy fuck. "Hi," he whispers back. "Do you mind...?"

He doesn't have to finish for George to understand what he means, trailing off into an open end. But, "Patches isn't here. She, um, Sapnap has her."

Dream's eyes flick up to fully look into George's now. He swallows. "That's okay. I didn't come for her."

Holy fuck.

"What did you come for, then?" George knows the answer, he only wants to hear him say it. When it finally comes, it's hushed.

"You."

It feels like the breath has been knocked out of George's lungs, replaced by a surprisingly pleasant squeeze, and he feels the sudden need to outwardly project that squeeze. So before he can think, he takes Dream's hand, and he squeezes.

"Let's get you to bed, then, yeah?"

Dream smiles, impossibly soft and wonderfully endearing, and George finally understands what he's been feeling this whole time when his lips dip down to quickly connect with his forehead, and he can feel it against his skin. He comes to terms with it when their noses bump together in the process of settling in bed, he embraces it when their socked feet bump together and draw quiet laughs from both of them.

As he falls asleep, he wonders if Dream's done the same.

I.

A week goes by, and he barely sees Dream at all.

He doesn't slip into his room under the guise of night anymore, and he shies away when they cross paths in the kitchen or the living room. He uses the excuse of work, saying 'I'd love to, but I have to edit,' whenever George tries to catch him alone to talk. He's not stupid, he knows what's going

on, but still, he's hesitant to believe it.

Nonetheless, he finds himself at Dream's door around two in the morning, rapping his knuckles against cold wood and just hoping he answers.

He does, and the door swings open.

Dream stands with one hand tight on the doorknob, mussed up hair haloing his tired face as he acknowledges George with wide eyes. They stare wordlessly at each other for God knows how long, both too nervous to start the conversation they're both already having in their heads. George tries to figure out what to say, what the conversation he wants to have even is, but he's not quite sure where to start.

A blatant 'I like you' seems far too sudden and far too bold, even for these late hours of the night. 'Can we talk?' feels too daunting— he's not about to scare Dream off again. He kicks himself mentally and tells himself to just go for it.

"I think I realized something," he finally blurts out, at the same time Dream says, "I need to tell you something."

He blinks. "You first," he says. As much as he needs to get it off his chest, he wants to do it in the least friendship-damaging way possible, so he pushes for Dream to go first. To scope out the territory, or do premature damage control, or something.

Dream nods and swipes his palms on the front of his sweats. He opens his mouth a few times, but nothing comes out, and eventually, he relaxes his shoulders and just takes a deep breath. He gives George a look that he knows is a silent thanks for the patience he holds with him, and whispers, "I like you."

George pauses. "Oh."

The confession, though unexpected, doesn't feel groundbreaking, it just... feels normal. Like something he already knew, just put outward into the world. Maybe it is. He wants to respond, doesn't want to leave Dream hanging, but he can't seem to force the words out of his mouth when Dream goes on rambling.

"I've liked you for— for a long time, and I know you probably don't like me the same way, which is fine. Obviously. I just felt like I was taking advantage of you every time I used Patches as an excuse and you—" he shoves his hands in his pockets and grimaces— "when you said—"

George's brain finally kickstarts itself, and the second it does, he steps forward and cuts Dream off with a gentle hand on the side of his face. It works, and Dream stares down at him with wide eyes, softening with a hopeful gleam as they search his face.

"Dream." George cups his jaw and moves his other hand to rest firmly on his hip. "Shut up."

"What are you doing?" he murmurs, the rise and fall of his chest beneath George's arm quickening.

George pushes himself up to hover just in front of his face, carefully brushing their noses together and letting his lips rest just above Dream's cupid's bow. He pushes forward, just barely, and his head spins when Dream's eyes flutter closed. "Is this okay?"

"God, yes," Dream says, and his own hands fly to George's face as he dips forward to connect their lips.

It's not much more than the press of two people against one another, but it really does feel like home. It doesn't take long for Dream to readjust, moving one hand down to hold onto the crook of George's elbow and moving his lips steadily against his own. He tastes like cucumber and the ocean and the sun in such a vibrantly Dream way, and George works to memorize it for rainy days. Absently, he wishes he would've done this sooner.

Eventually, they pull apart, laughing softly against each other's faces with their eyes still closed. Dream drops small pecks wherever he can reach on George's face, smiling softly when he shies away and scrunches his nose.

"I like you too," he whispers. "Dummy."

When Dream invites him in, putting Patches out and closing the door behind them, George decides that he could love him.

Maybe he already does.

End Notes

here's my [twitter](#) if you wanna come yell with me (: (or at me)

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!